

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7721

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SANA

USIA WASHDC

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USIA FOR IOP/M

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SA, UR, SO

SUBJECT: SAUDI PRESS ON THE KREMLIN'S CRISIS IN SOMALIA

1. PARAGRAPH 2 CONTAINS EXCERPTS FROM AN EDITORIAL WHICH
APPEARED ON MARCH 20 IN THE INFLUENTIAL DAILY AL MADINA ON
THE SUBJECT OF THE USSR'S TROUBLES IN SOMALIA. THE GIST
OF THE EDITORIAL IS THAT THE SOMALIS ARE NOT TRUE MARXISTS
BUT WERE PUSHED TO ACCEPT SOVIET AID BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T GET
IT FROM THE WEST. THEY PAID A HEAVY PRICE IN HAVING TO GIVE
THE SOVIETS BASES ON THEIR TERRITORY. THEY ARE NOW THINKING
OF A CHANGE BECAUSE THE SOVIETS ARE HOLDING OUT ON NEW ARMS
AND SPARE PARTS AS THEY DID IN EGYPT, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME
GIVING LIBERAL ASSISTANCE TO THE MARXIST RULERS OF ETHIOPIA.

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THIS APPEARS TO BE A SOMEWHAT MORE OPTIMISTIC VERSION OF THE
VIEW HELD BY TOP SAUDI LEADERS.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. BEGIN TEXT.

"KREMLIN CRISIS IN SOMALIA"

SOVIET-SOMALI RELATIONS ARE DETERIORATING AND MAY
NOW HAVE REACHED THEIR LOW POINT.

IT SEEMS THE SOVIETS DID NOT LEARN FROM THE LESSON WHICH THEY GOT FROM EGYPT.

THE SOVIETS HAVE STARTED TO PLAY THE SAME GAME WITH SOMALIA. THEY ARE NOW REFUSING TO SUPPLY SOMALIA WITH NEW WEAPONS AND WITH THE SPARE PARTS NEEDED FOR ITS SOVIET MADE WEAPONS AND ARMS. THIS FACT WAS KEPT SECRET UNTIL RECENTLY. BY DOING SO SOVIET-SOMALI RELATIONS HAVE BEGUN TO ASSUME A CRITICAL SHAPE.

BUT WHILE THE SOVIETS HAVE REFUSED TO SUPPLY SOMALIA WITH ITS NEEDS, THEY HAVE BEGUN TO SUPPLY GENEROUSLY THE MILITARY RULERS IN ETHIOPIA BECAUSE OF THEIR MARXIST TENDENCIES. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE CONFLICTING SITUATION BETWEEN SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA IS GETTING WORSE EVERYDAY AND THAT THEY MIGHT CLASH IN A WAR IN THE FUTURE.

SOMALIA ON THE OTHER HAND REGARDS GENEROUS AID TO ETHIOPIA BY THE SOVIETS AS REPRESENTING A HOSTILE ACTION AGAINST IT.

THE SOVIETS EXERT PRESSURE ON SOMALIA IN ORDER TO PREVENT SOMALIA FROM FIGHTING ETHIOPIA, ALTHOUGH ETHIOPIA OCCUPIES SOME SOMALI TERRITORY.

THE SOMALIS ARE NOT MARXISTS. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THEIR NEED FOR ASSISTANCE AND AID WHICH WAS NOT MET BY THE WEST THEY WERE FORCED TO ACCEPT THE SOVIET ASSISTANCE. THIS HAS COST THEM A VERY HIGH PRICE IN TERMS OF INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY IN ALLOWING THE SOVIETS TO USE THE SOMALI TERRITORIES AS A MILITARY AND NAVAL BASE.

THERE ARE RUMORS THAT SOMALI POLICY IS INCLINING TOWARDS CHANGE. SOME SOMALI POLITICAL CIRCLES SEE THAT IT IS NOW THE TIME FOR SOMALI POLICY TO FREE ITSELF FROM ITS LOYALTY

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TO THE SOVIETS . . .

THE SHORTSIGHTED POLICY OF THE SOVIETS GIVES AN OPPORTUNITY TO THE SOMALIS TO FREE THEMSELVES FROM SOVIET INFLUENCE. END TEXT.

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